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Letter dated 25 November 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government and further to my letter dated 23 November 1998 (A/53/703-S/1998/1119), I have the honour to draw your attention to new violations of the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus and of the flight information region (FIR) of Nicosia by military aircraft of the Turkish Air Force, recorded on 22 and 23 November 1998.

On 22 November 1998, thirty-two (32) military aircraft of the Turkish Air Force (26 F-16, 3 KC-135, 2 CN-235 and 1 C-130) entered the Nicosia FIR, violating international air traffic regulations. Ten of the F-16 exited the Nicosia FIR, two of them towards the Ankara FIR and eight in a south-easterly direction. Sixteen F-16 violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus flying over the area of Karpasia, exiting afterwards in a south-easterly direction. The two CN-235 violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus, flying over the area of the Cape of Apostolos Andreas. One of the KC-135 violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus, flying over the area of Karpasia before exiting together with the other two KC-135 in a south-easterly direction. The C-130 violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus, landing at the illegal airport of Lefkoniko in the occupied area of the Republic, before taking off at 1526 hours on the same day, returning to the Ankara FIR.

On 23 November 1998, thirty-four (34) military aircraft of the Turkish Air Force (16 F-16, 8 F-4, 4 of unknown-type, 3 KC-135, 1 C-130 and 2 CN-235) entered the Nicosia FIR violating international air traffic regulations. The 16 F-16 violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus, flying over the area of Karpasia, exiting afterwards in a south-easterly direction. The two CN-235 violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus, flying over the area of the Cape of Apostolos Andreas. The four unknown-type aircraft violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus, flying over the area of

Karpasia, exiting afterwards in a south-easterly direction. The C-130 violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus, flying over the area of Mesaoria and landing afterwards at the illegal airport of Lefkoniko, in the occupied area of the Republic, before taking off at 1350 hours on the same day, returning back to the Ankara FIR. The eight F-4 and three KC-135, after their flight within the Nicosia FIR, also exited in a south-easterly direction.

As stated in my previous letters, such unauthorized intrusions into the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus are in violation of international air traffic rules and, at the same time, are in contravention of the provisions of the Security Council resolutions on Cyprus, which state that such overflights increase tension on the island and undermine efforts towards achieving a final settlement.

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, I wish to strongly protest these new provocative acts by Turkey against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus. The frequency and intensity of these airspace violations are a further reminder of Turkey's offensive disregard of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and all the relevant decisions of the Organization on the question of Cyprus.

Furthermore, these continuing overflights by the Turkish Air Force, as well as the presence of the Turkish military occupation forces on the island constitute the underlying causes of tension in Cyprus.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 62, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Sotos ZACKHEOS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative